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A "simplified ballot with as few names on it as possible" was the first recommendation of the recent Boston charter commission, and this recommendation was embodied in the new charter. There can be no doubt about the fact that our municipalities are moving rapidly in the direction of a simple government adequately controlled by simple electoral machinery.

In conclusion we may say, with Carlyle, when it grows dark enough we can see stars. When the complicated electoral machinery breaks down completely, when the sheer necessity for getting important governmental work well done becomes imperative, when the ballot gets so big that the voting booths will not contain it, we can be brought to see that democracy can function well only through simple government.

DISCUSSION

Prof. Henry J. Ford of Princeton University opened the discussion. He characterized the present ballot monstrosity as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the present system. It is easy to obtain assent to the proposal that the ballot should be shortened, but difficulty begins as soon as it is asked how shall it be shortened. It will then be found that the short ballot movement raises questions which involve the entire organization of public authority. All countries in which popular government has been established have the short ballot. We started with the short ballot, but we have gradually converted it into the present long ballot—a labyrinth in which only professional politicians can find their way. What is the cause of this great difference in the course of political development? May it not be due to the influence upon American politics of the doctrine of the separation of the powers. In countries having the short ballot the executive and legislative branches are invariably connected; with us they are separated. It may be that derangement of function due to this separation has been the cause of the process of change that has produced the long ballot. This is a subject well suited to the application of the inductive method now employed by political science. The origin and the spread of the doctrine of the separation of the powers lie in a well-lighted area of history. Data seem to be abundant by which we can reach an authoritative conclusion whether the separation of the powers is compatible with democratic government. If the monster ballot belongs to a genetic series of which the separation of the powers is the beginning, then the cure evidently lies in the removal of this fundamental defect of the American constitutional system.